

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method to manage a customized network connection application, the method including:
 - generating a plurality of input interfaces to receive customization information pertaining to the customized network connection application;
 - receiving the customization information pertaining to the customized network connection application via the plurality of input interfaces;
 - storing the customization information as a profile associated with the customized network connection application;
 - automatically generating the customized network connection application utilizing the profile; and
 - distributing the customized network connection application to at least one recipient.
2. The method of claim 1 including, subsequent to the distribution of the customized network connection application, receiving further customization information indicating a modification to the profile associated with the customized network connection application, and updating the customized network application in accordance with the modification to the profile.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein a plurality of copies of the customized network connection application are distributed to a plurality of recipients, and each of the copies of the network connection application is updated in accordance with the modification to the profile.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information is received at a customization system from a customer of the customization system, and wherein the customized network connection application is distributed to a plurality of end-users associated with the customer.
5. The method of claim 1 including distributing in the customized network connection application as a self-installing executable.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein the plurality of input interfaces include a plurality of markup language documents, and wherein the generating of the input interfaces includes communicating the plurality of markup language documents from a customization system to a computer system accessed by the customer.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes pricing information indicating whether the customized network connection application displays a connection price associated with at least one network connection point accessible utilizing the customized network connection application.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the pricing information specifies a currency in which the connection price is displayed by the customized network connection application.
9. The method of claim 8 wherein the pricing information specifies a conversion rate to be applied when the connection price is displayed in the specified currency.
10. The method of claim 7 wherein the connection price is based on a basic connection price specified in a pricing plan associated with the customer and negotiated between the customer and a network access provider.
11. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes network access point information identifying a plurality of network access points to which the customized network connection application is authorized to establish a network connection.
12. The method of claim 11 wherein the network access point information includes Point of Presence (POP) information identifying at least one Point of Presence.
13. The method of claim 12 wherein the Point of Presence information includes any one of a group of information items including a country identifier, a region identifier, a city identifier, an area identifier, a telephone number, a maximum connection speed, and price information indicating a price for accessing the at least one Point of Presence.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the network connection application is authorized to use any one of a collection of network access points to establish a network connection, and wherein the customization information includes update information indicating whether the customized network connection application is automatically to update the collection of network access points.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the collection of network access points includes a collection of Points of Presence (POPs).

16. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes session limit information indicating a limited amount of time for which a network connection may be established utilizing the customized network connection application.

17. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes connection mode information indicating a mode by which the customized network connection application establishes a network connection.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the connection mode information indicates any one of a group of connection modes including a modem connection, an ISDN connection, a wireless broadband connection, and a wired broadband connection.

19. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes a logo to be displayed by an interface of the customized network connection application.

20. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes post-connect action information identifying at least one action to be performed subsequent to establishment of a network connection by the customized network connection application.

21. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes pre-connect action information identifying at least one action to be performed prior to establishment of a network connection by the customized network connection application.

22. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes error action information identifying at least one action to be performed upon occurrence of an error in an establishment of a network connection by the customized network connection application.

23. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes disconnect action information identifying at least one action to be performed upon disconnect of a network connection established by the customized network connection application.

24. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes phonebook information identifying at least one phonebook providing a markup on a basic connection price charged by a network access provider, and to be included in a total connection price to be charged to an end-user of the customized network connection application.

25. The method of claim 24 wherein the markup is expressed as a percentage of the basic connection price.

26. The method of claim 24 wherein the total connection price comprising a sum of the basic connection price and the markup is displayed to the end-user via an interface of the customized network connection application.

27. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes network access point filter information providing criteria to filter network access points that are accessible utilizing the customized network connection application.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein the criteria include any one of a group of criteria including a country, a state, a city, a phone number, a connection speed, an access type and a price.

29. The method of claim 1 wherein the customization information includes pricing rule information specifying a pricing rule to be applied to network connection points within at least one country.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein the pricing rule specifies a markup percentage to a connection price charged by a network access provider for access in the at least one country.

31. The method of claim 29 wherein the pricing rule specifies a range price rule that utilizes a basic connection price charged by a network access provider for access in the at least one country.

32. A system to manage a customized network connection application, the system including:

a customization tool to generate a plurality of input interfaces to receive customization information pertaining to the customized network connection application, and to receive the customization information pertaining to the customized network connection application via the plurality of input interfaces;

a database to store the customization information as a profile associated with the customized network connection application; and

a build server automatically to generate the customized network connection application utilizing the profile and to distribute the customized network connection application to at least one recipient.

33. The system of claim 32 wherein, subsequent to the distribution of the customized network connection application, the customization tool is to receive further customization information indicating a modification to the profile associated with the customized network connection application, and to update the customized network application in accordance with the modification to the profile.

34. The system of claim 33 wherein the build server is to distribute a plurality of copies of the customized network connection application to a plurality of

recipients, and to update each of the copies of the network connection application in accordance with the modification to the profile.

35. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization tool is to receive the customization information at a customization system from a customer of the customization system, and wherein the build server is to distribute the customized network connection application to a plurality of end-users associated with the customer.

36. The system of claim 32 wherein the build server is to distribute the customized network connection application as a self-installing executable.

37. The system of claim 32 wherein customization tool is to generate the plurality of input interfaces as including a plurality of markup language documents, and to communicate the plurality of markup language documents from a customization system to a computer system accessed by the customer.

38. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes pricing information indicating whether the customized network connection application displays a connection price associated with at least one network connection point accessible utilizing the customized network connection application.

39. The system of claim 38 wherein the pricing information specifies a currency in which the connection price is displayed by the customized network connection application.

40. The system of claim 39 wherein the pricing information specifies a conversion rate to be applied when the connection price is displayed in the specified currency.

41. The system of claim 38 wherein the connection price is based on a basic connection price specified in a pricing plan associated with the customer and negotiated between the customer and a network access provider.

42. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes network access point information identifying a plurality of network access points to which the customized network connection application is authorized to establish a network connection.

43. The system of claim 42 wherein the network access point information includes Point of Presence (POP) information identifying at least one Point of Presence.

44. The system of claim 43 wherein the Point of Presence information includes any one of a group of information items including a country identifier, a region identifier, a city identifier, an area identifier, a telephone number, a maximum connection speed, and price information indicating a price for accessing the at least one Point of Presence.

45. The system of claim 32 wherein the build server is to generate the network connection application as authorized to use any one of a collection of network access points to establish a network connection, and wherein the customization information includes update information indicating whether the customized

network connection application is automatically to update the collection of network access points.

46. The system of claim 45 wherein the collection of network access points includes a collection of Points of Presence (POPs).

47. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes session limit information indicating a limited amount of time for which a network connection may be established utilizing the customized network connection application.

48. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes connection mode information indicating a mode by which the customized network connection application establishes a network connection.

49. The system of claim 48 wherein the connection mode information indicates any one of a group of connection modes including a modem connection, an ISDN connection, a wireless broadband connection, and a wired broadband connection.

50. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes a logo to be displayed by an interface of the customized network connection application.

51. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes post-connect action information identifying at least one action to be performed

subsequent to establishment of a network connection by the customized network connection application.

52. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes pre-connect action information identifying at least one action to be performed prior to establishment of a network connection by the customized network connection application.

53. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes error action information identifying at least one action to be performed upon occurrence of an error in an establishment of a network connection by the customized network connection application.

54. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes disconnect action information identifying at least one action to be performed upon disconnect of a network connection established by the customized network connection application.

55. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes phonebook information identifying at least one phonebook providing a markup on a basic connection price charged by a network access provider, and to be included in a total connection price to be charged to an end-user of the customized network connection application.

56. The system of claim 55 wherein the markup is expressed as a percentage of the basic connection price.

57. The system of claim 55 wherein the total connection price comprising a sum of the basic connection price and the markup is displayed to the end-user via an interface of the customized network connection application.

58. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes network access point filter information providing criteria to filter network access points that are accessible utilizing the customized network connection application.

59. The system of claim 58 wherein the criteria include any one of a group of criteria including a country, a state, a city, a phone number, a connection speed, an access type and a price.

60. The system of claim 32 wherein the customization information includes pricing rule information specifying a pricing rule to be applied to network connection points within at least one country.

61. The system of claim 60 wherein the pricing rule specifies a markup percentage to a connection price charged by a network access provider for access in the at least one country.

62. The system of claim 60 wherein the pricing rule specifies a range price rule that utilizes a basic connection price charged by a network access provider for access in the at least one country.

63. A system to manage a customized network connection application, the system including:

first means for generating a plurality of input interfaces to receive customization information pertaining to the customized network connection application, and for receiving the customization information pertaining to the customized network connection application via the plurality of input interfaces;

second means for storing the customization information as a profile associated with the customized network connection application;

third means for automatically generating the customized network connection application utilizing the profile and for distributing the customized network connection application to at least one recipient.

64. The system of claim 63 wherein, subsequent to the distribution of the customized network connection application, the first means is for receiving further customization information indicating a modification to the profile associated with the customized network connection application, and for updating the customized network application in accordance with the modification to the profile.

65. The system of claim 64 wherein the third means is for distributing a plurality of copies of the customized network connection application to a plurality of recipients, and for updating each of the copies of the network connection application in accordance with the modification to the profile.

66. The system of claim 63 wherein the first means is for receiving the customization information at a customization system from a customer of the customization system, and wherein the third means is for distributing the customized network connection application to a plurality of end-users associated with the customer.

67. A machine-readable medium having a sequence of instructions stored thereon that, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to perform a method to manage a customized network connection application, the method including:

generating a plurality of input interfaces to receive customization information pertaining to the customized network connection application;

receiving the customization information pertaining to the customized network connection application via the plurality of input interfaces;

storing the customization information as a profile associated with the customized network connection application;

automatically generating the customized network connection application utilizing the profile; and

distributing the customized network connection application to at least one recipient.

68. The machine-readable medium of claim 67 wherein the sequence of instructions, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to receive further customization information indicating a modification to the profile associated with the customized network connection application, and to update the customized network application in accordance with the modification to the profile.

69. The method of claim 68 wherein a plurality of copies of the customized network connection application are distributed to a plurality of recipients, and each of the copies of the network connection application is updated in accordance with the modification to the profile.

70. The method of claim 67 wherein the customization information is received at a customization system from a customer of the customization system, and wherein the customized network connection application is distributed to a plurality of end-users associated with the customer.